REMARKS

The Applicants thank the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application. Claims 1, 2, 4, 6-11, 14, and 16-22 are pending. Claim 23 is cancelled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein. Claims 3, 5, 12, 13, and 15 were previously cancelled. Claims 11, 16, and 22 are amended. Claims 1, 11, and 22 are independent. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks set forth herein.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner states that claim 23 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, that claims 11, 14, and 16-21 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, and that claims 1, 2, 4, and 6-10 are allowed.

The Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter in this application. As set forth above, the allowable limitations of objected-to claim 23 has been incorporated into independent claim 22. Therefore independent claim 22 is in condition for allowance.

Information Disclosure Citation

The Examiner is respectfully requested to acknowledge the references supplied with the Information Disclosure Statement filed October 4, 2005.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph

Claims 11, 14, and 16-21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

In order to overcome this rejection, the Applicants have amended claim 11 to address the issue pointed out by the Examiner. The Applicants respectfully submit that the claims, as amended, particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the Applicants regard as the invention. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claim 22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over St. John (U.S. 4,226,320) in view of Peterson (U.S. 5,562,555).

This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As mentioned above, but while not conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner's rejection, but merely to advance prosecution of the instant application, independent claim 22 has been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of objected-to claim 23.

Accordingly, independent claim 22 is in condition for allowance.

The Examiner will note that dependent claim 16 has been amended to correct an inconsistency.

All dependent claims are in condition for allowance due to their dependency from allowable independent claims, or due to the additional novel features set forth therein.

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Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) are respectfully requested.
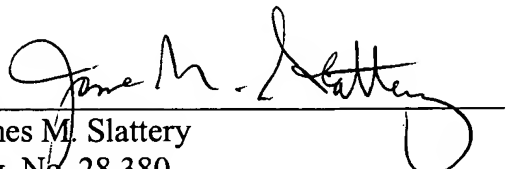
CONCLUSION

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and that the present application is in condition for allowance.

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, he is invited to telephone Carl T. Thomsen (Reg. No. 50,786) at (703) 205-8000.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17, particularly extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: June 15, 2006

By

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